

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 536

By McNally

A RESOLUTION relative to the regulation of methadone clinics.

WHEREAS, methadone has been used in the treatment of opiate addiction since the 1950s, and the methadone maintenance treatment protocol has been used since the early 1970s; and

WHEREAS, in Tennessee, methadone clinics are for-profit entities, and thus there is a financial disincentive to wean patients off methadone and to refuse treatment to patients who are still taking other drugs, including other opioids, sedatives, and stimulants; and

WHEREAS, federal patient privacy and confidentiality laws preclude state regulation of methadone clinics in many aspects; and

WHEREAS, because methadone maintenance treatment can literally last for years, the absence of effective state regulation creates an environment that is ripe for abuse; and

WHEREAS, the most glaring omission in the federal regulation of methadone clinics is that such clinics are prohibited from reporting the details of their methadone treatment protocol, including patient-specific information regarding dosage and frequency of appointments, to the prescription drug monitoring programs of the various states in which they operate; and

WHEREAS, this omission leaves a gaping hole in the states' efforts to combat drug abuse; and

WHEREAS, at the very least, state regulators should be informed of the amount of methadone prescribed and the number of patients seen and the frequency of their appointments at methadone clinics; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that this General Assembly hereby memorializes the United States Congress to

amend the Public Health Service Act and all other applicable federal statutes to require methadone clinics to participate in the prescription drug monitoring programs in the states in which such clinics operate by providing patient-specific information relative to the prescription and use of controlled substances, including opioids, and other potentially harmful prescription drugs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be transmitted to each member of Tennessee's delegation to the United States Congress.